

Wakeman Memorial  
648 Harbor Road  
Southport  
Fairfield County  
Connecticut

HABS No. CONN-321

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PHOTOGRAPH

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20243

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS NO. CONN-321

## WAKEMAN MEMORIAL

Location: 648 Harbor Road (northwest side of street),  
Southport, Fairfield County, Connecticut.

USGS Westport Quadrangle Map; Universal Transverse  
Mercator Coordinates: 18.644120.4554760.

Present Owner  
and Occupant: George P. Brett, Jr.

Present Use: Residence.

Statement of  
Significance: The Wakeman Memorial is one of a few buildings erected in Southport during the early twentieth century. It is designed in the Neo-Classical mode, the architectural style which enjoyed widespread popularity at this time. Characteristic of classical tradition, the heavy detailing which interrupts the austerity of the Memorial's rectangular massing follows an exacting symmetrical design. The boldly proportioned central portico is supported by square Tuscan columns with an Ionic fretwork entablature and denticulated cornice, and topped by a spindled parapet and an elliptical shaped Palladian window on the second story. The red tiled Dutch gable roof, splaying beyond the exterior walls, is bracketed by decorative modillions. Completing the symmetrical composition are three evenly spaced dormers and two end chimneys.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Circa 1910. No records are known to exist which pinpoint the date the Memorial was built. The one indication that the structure was standing as of 1912 is a deed in Volume 80, page 684, recorded on June 22, 1912, between Sturges & Sturges and the Wakeman Memorial Association, selling the right to "lay, construct and maintain a covered sewer and drain from its (the Association's) land to Mill River." This would indicate that the structure was standing or in the process of being constructed.
2. Architect: No information available.

3. Original and subsequent owners: The Wakeman Memorial Association sold the property to George Brett, Jr. on January 26, 1948, recorded in Book 221, page 382.
4. Original plan and construction: The original structure measures sixty feet (five-bay southeast facade) by forty-five feet, and is symmetrical about a projecting central entry portico. The two-and-a-half stories are supported by a reinforced concrete frame and covered with brick walls laid in common bond. Framing the central doorway is a one-story portico supported by two pairs of square brick Tuscan columns. The boldly proportioned Ionic entablature consists of a broken architrave, separated from the fretwork patterned frieze by a thin filet molding, and terminates in a boldly denticulated cornice. A wooden parapet with turned balusters encompasses the portico's roof.

The main house is covered with a Dutch gable roof of glazed red tiles. A simple cornice articulates the roof eave and returns at gable ends. Decorative modillions and a dentiled fascia trim the eave. Three round-headed dormers, spaced at regular intervals, face the street, and square brick end chimneys sit atop the roof ridge. The windows on the front facade are double-hung sash set into brick jambs and framed by a cement sill and keystone architrave. Solid wooden shutters flank the openings. Above the central entrance, a Palladian window trimmed with Adamesque details is inset in a brick arch and topped by a cement keystone.

5. Alterations and additions: The structure's interior was adapted for use as a residence in 1948. Precisely what alterations were completed at this time is unknown.

B. Bibliography:

Fairfield County Deed Records, Office of the Recorder, Fairfield Town Hall, Fairfield, Connecticut.

Prepared by Jan E. Cigliano  
Staff Historian  
Historic American  
Buildings Survey  
January 1979

PART II. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the Southport Historic District Commission, several members of whom provided the necessary funds. The project was completed

in the summer of 1966 under the general direction of James C. Massey, then the Chief of HABS; Ralph Schwarz of the Ford Foundation; and Architect John C. Waite (Columbia University); with assistant architects Christopher Benninger (Harvard University), Richard Haines (University of Kentucky) and Andrew Craig Morrison (University of Michigan), and architectural historian David T. Van Zanten (Harvard University), at the HABS Field Office in Southport, Connecticut. The data was prepared and edited in HABS Washington office in December 1978 by Jan E. Cigliano, staff historian. Photographs were taken by HABS staff photographer Jack E. Boucher in September 1966.